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SUBJECT: DARFUR PEACE TALKS: AU EXTENDS NEGOTIATIONS BY 48
HOURS

1. (SBU) Summary: African Union Special Envoy Dr. Salim Salim extended the deadline for the Darfur negotiations by 48 hours at the request of USDEL, other international partners, and the parties. Salim announced his decision in a late night plenary and urged all the parties to take full advantage of the additional time. The extension followed a day full of activity by USDEL and the international partners with the parties. USDEL made specific proposals on disarmament of the janjaweed and integration of the movements' forces and worked with Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) faction leader Minni Minnawi and the Government of Sudan. In addition, USDEL urged SLM's other faction leader Abdelwahid Nur to make constructive counterproposals to Sudanese Vice President Taha on power and wealth-sharing. International partners also warned Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) not to play the role of spoiler, which it continues to do. USDEL is using the extension to continue facilitating talks between Minnawi and the GOS on security issues and provided needed support to Abdelwahid Nur in his discussions on other issues. End Summary.

2. (SBU) African Union Special Envoy Dr. Salim Salim's decision to extend the Darfur peace talks for another 48 hours came after a day of intense activity by USDEL, the international partners, and some of the parties. Salim asked USDEL to lead off the plenary with an update on discussions between SLM faction leader Minni Minnawi and the Government of Sudan on key security issues: disarmament of the janjaweed and the integration of the movements' forces into the Sudanese military and security services. Khartoum CDA Hume proposed a 48 hour deadline extension to allow these bilateral meetings to continue, emphasizing that the U.S. is very concerned about the security situation and the safety of the people of Darfur. USDEL kept Salim fully apprised of its activities, which Salim supported, throughout the day.

3. (SBU) After meeting with Mutrif Sadiq and Minni Minnawi separately, USDEL sat in on bilateral meeting between Minnawi, who was accompanied by two commanders and two politicians, and the GOS (Mutrif Sadiq, Intelligence Chief Salah Gosh, and Generals Mohammed Ibrahim and Ismat Abderahamane). During the four hour meeting, which focused primarily on integration issues, Minni and the GOS agreed on integration of rebel members into the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), but not on how it would be accomplished. The GOS proposed an overall ratio of one rebel troop to four Sudanese soldiers in integrated units, while the rebels proposed the opposite ratio of 4 rebel soldier to one SAF troop. The SLM does not have enough forces to integrate at this ratio. The two parties could not close gap yesterday, but appeared ready to continue discussing it.

¶4. (SBU) USDEL also worked with SLM faction leader Abdelwahid Nur throughout the day. Ambassador Yates urged Abdelwahid to be selective and constructive in putting forward proposals to the GOS on the issues of representation and region. Later, the African Union Mediation with selected partners (US, UN , EU, Arab League) met with Movement representatives to receive formal reactions to the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) draft. Uncharacteristically, Abdelwahid was the most focused and reasonable. His leading mediators presented rationale points to strengthen their participation which included a tacit acceptance of the DPA formulation on a region for Darfur.

¶5. (SBU) SLM Minnawi and especially JEM were almost totally rejectionist. Their complaints were launched with recriminations of the AU for the lateness of the draft DPA received only in English until the Arabic translation was completed on April 30, giving them little time to study, react, and engage with the GOS. (Note: We have little sympathy for this argument since the leadership of both movements, especially JEM, are English speakers. End Note.) The SLM Minnawi team (speaking while Minni himself was meeting with CDA Hume and members of USDEL and Senior GOS officials), with less than eight hours to the deadline, called the DPA only a "draft which needs plenty of work to become a comprehensive peace agreement". JEM spokesman Ahmed Tugod Lissan was more categorical saying that the draft does not reflect any structures capable of bring about real change in Darfur. JEM has announced that they will not sign. SLM Minnawi's spokesman left the door open.

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COMMENT
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¶6. (SBU) Beyond our close work in tandem with the AU Mediation, the rest of the international community with the exception of the EU, Arab League, Canada, and SGSSR Jan Pronk, who came for the weekend, have been passive in working the parties to facilitate agreement acceptance. None shows much sympathy for the Movements' recalcitrance and all seem to await the positive results in security arrangements which have been the focus of USDEL.
FUREY